

What is claimed is:

1. A method for facilitating seamless access to a plurality of disparate data sources within a single login session, the method comprising the steps of:
 - a. identifying the mode in which access to the plurality of data sources is required,
5 the mode being either simultaneous or independent access to the data sources;
 - b. receiving a data query, the data query being a single request for data access;
 - c. converting the query to a format capable of facilitating access to disparate data sources in accordance with the identified mode of data access;
 - d. routing the converted query to the plurality of data sources; and
10 e. retrieving data from the plurality of data sources in response to the routed query.
2. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the step of identifying the mode in which access to the data sources is required comprises the step of receiving the responsibility assumed by a user, the responsibility indicating user preference with respect to data access, the user preference being either to simultaneously access
15 the data sources or independently access at least one of the data sources.
3. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the received data query is a SQL statement.
4. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the data sources are relational databases, data items in each relational database having multiple attributes and relationships
20 with other data items of the database.

5. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the step of converting the query comprises the steps of:
 - a. constructing a plurality of new queries, each new query corresponding to at least one data source as specified for access in accordance with the user responsibility, the new query being capable of extracting data from the corresponding data source; and
 - b. integrating the newly constructed queries to form a union query.
6. The method as recited in claim 5 wherein the union query is a UNION ALL SQL statement.
7. A method for providing simultaneous access to data residing in a current database and an archive database, the method comprising the steps of:
 - a. receiving a data query;
 - b. constructing a first data query corresponding to the current database;
 - c. constructing a second data query corresponding to the archive database;
 - d. integrating the first data query and the second data query to form a union query, the union query being capable of accessing current as well as archive databases;
 - e. routing the union query to the current database and the archive database simultaneously;
 - f. retrieving data from the current database and the archive database; and

g. integrating the query results from the current and archive databases.

8. The method as recited in claim 7 wherein the data query received from the user is in an SQL statement.

9. A system for facilitating seamless access to a plurality of disparate data sources

5 within a single login session, the system comprising:

a. means for identifying the mode in which data access is required, the mode being at least one of: I) simultaneous, and II) independent access to the data sources;

b. means for receiving a data query, the data query being a single request for data access;

10 c. means for converting the query to a format capable of facilitating access to disparate data sources in accordance with the identified mode of data access;

d. means for routing the converted query to the plurality of data sources;

e. means for retrieving data from the plurality of data sources in response to the routed query; and

15 f. means for presenting the data retrieved from the disparate sources in an integrated format.

10. The system as recited in claim 9 wherein the means for identifying the mode comprises means for receiving the responsibility assumed by a user, the responsibility indicating user preference with respect to data access, the user

preference being at least one of: I) simultaneously accessing the data sources, and
II) independently accessing at least one of the data sources.

11. The system as recited in claim 9 wherein the query converting means further comprises:

- 5 a. means for constructing a plurality of new queries, each new query corresponding to at least one data source as specified for access in accordance with the user responsibility, the new query being capable of extracting data from a specific data source; and
- b. means for integrating the newly constructed queries to form a union query.

10 12. The system as recited in claim 9 wherein the data source is a current database, the current database having live data stored in it.

13. The system as recited in claim 9 wherein the data source is an archive database, the archive database having historical data stored in it.

14. An enterprise application comprising:

- 15 a. a plurality of databases;
- b. a front end comprising:
 - i. means for accepting a user responsibility from a user, the responsibility indicating user preference for mode of data access, the mode being at least one of: I) simultaneous and II) independent access to the data sources;

ii. means for accepting a query in a standard format; and

iii. means for presenting results corresponding to the query;

c. an interoperable layer for converting the query accepted from the front end to a format capable of facilitating access to disparate data sources in accordance with the specified mode; and

d. a backend server comprising:

i. means for routing the query obtained from the interoperable layer to the plurality of databases; and

ii. means for retrieving query results from the plurality of databases;

wherein the query results from the plurality of databases are presented to the user in an integrated manner.

15. The application as recited in claim 14 wherein one of the plurality of databases is a current database, the current database having live data stored in it.

16. The application as recited in claim 14 wherein one of the plurality of databases is an archive database, the archive database having historical data stored in it.

17. The application as recited in claim 14 wherein the interoperable layer receives a query in SQL format and converts the query into a UNION SQL format.

18. A computer program product for accessing a plurality of disparate data sources simultaneously or independently within a single login session, the computer program product comprising:

- 5 a. program instruction means for identifying the mode in which data access is required by a user;
- b. program instruction means for receiving a data query, the data query being a single request for data access by the user;
- c. program instruction means for converting the query to a format capable of facilitating access to disparate data sources in accordance with the identified
10 mode of data access;
- d. program instruction means for routing the converted query to the plurality of data sources;
- e. program instruction means for retrieving data from the plurality of data sources in response to the routed query; and
- 15 f. program instruction means for presenting the data retrieved from the disparate sources in an integrated format to the user.

19. The computer program product as recited in claim 18 wherein the query converting program means further comprises:

- a. program instruction means for constructing a plurality of new queries, each new query corresponding to at least one data source, the new query being capable of extracting data from a specific data source; and
- b. program instruction means for integrating the newly constructed queries with the original query to form a union query.

5